



Decisions by the COVID-19 Ministerial Group

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COVID-19: Auckland Community Cases: Options to Mandate Face Coverings at Alert Level 4

Portfolio COVID-19 Response

On 17 August 2021, following advice that a community case of COVID-19 had been identified in Auckland, Cabinet authorised a group of Ministers comprising the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for COVID-19 Response and Associate Minister of Health (Hon Dr Ayesha Verrall) to have Power to Act to take decisions on Alert Level 4 timings and settings [CAB-21-MIN-0324].

Following discussions on 18 August 2021 with officials and Ministers, the group of Ministers with Power to Act:

- 1 **noted** that on 16 August 2021, Cabinet agreed to expand the settings at which face coverings are mandated, including at the following settings at Alert Level 4:
 - 1.1 on public transport and at departure points, e.g. train stations and bus stops;
 - 1.2 on flights;
 - 1.3 in taxi or ride-share vehicles (drivers and passengers);
 - 1.4 visitors to healthcare facilities;
 - 1.5 inside any retail business that are still open, including supermarkets, pharmacies and petrol stations;[CAB-21-MIN-0315]
- 2 **noted** that the above decision has not yet been announced, and was not due to take effect until October 2021;
- 3 **agreed** to implement the decision set out in paragraph 1 above from 11.59pm on Wednesday, 18 August 2021, and to further expand those requirements at Alert Level 4 to provide that a face covering must be worn by all people at all businesses and services operating at Alert Level 4 that involve customer contact;
- 4 **noted** that the above decision excludes health care and aged care facilities because they have existing public health measures in place (including PPE), but that visitors to these health care facilities will be required to wear face coverings.

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